

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL****PUBLIC REPORT**

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>Report of:</b> <b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>Interim Corporate Director Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b> <b>13<sup>th</sup> September 2017</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CARERS' GRANTS – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK</b>
<b>Key Decision: Yes</b>	<b>Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 004084/2017</b>
<b>If not in the Forward Plan:</b> <b>(please "X" box)</b>	<b>Chief Executive approved</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>O&amp;S Chairman approved</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Cllr Paulette Hamilton - Health and Social Care</b>
<b>Relevant O&amp;S Chairman:</b>	<b>Cllr John Cotton - Health, Wellbeing and the Environment</b>
<b>Wards affected:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

<b>1. Purpose of report:</b>
1.1 To give an analysis of feedback gained and to outline revisions to the Carers' Grant Scheme.

<b>2. Decision(s) recommended:</b>
That Cabinet:-
2.1 Notes the findings of consultation on the future of the Carers' Grant Scheme;
2.2 Approves the closure of the Carers' Grant Scheme – paragraph 5.6;
2.3 Approves the introduction of new arrangements which allow the use of the Council's remaining funds to be linked to carers' assessments carried out by the Carers' Hub, so that specific outcomes for the carer can be identified – paragraph 5.7, to commence from 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2017, or the earliest practicable date thereafter.

<b>Lead Contact Officer(s):</b>	Charles Ashton-Gray Service Lead – Commissioning Centre of Excellence
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<b>3. Consultation</b>
<p>3.1 <u>Internal</u></p> <p>Legal &amp; Governance Department, City Finance and the Directorate for Adult Social Care &amp; Health Management Team have been involved in the preparation of this report.</p> <p>3.2 <u>External</u></p> <p>The Council consulted on its proposed 2017/18+ budget savings between 8<sup>th</sup> December and 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and received 1,639 responses to the online survey on the 'Be Heard' portal. One of the savings proposals was HW13 Carers' Grant.</p> <p>This consultation set out broad issues for the corporate consultation and the overall budget position. It identified that there would also be consultations on specific service proposals in the new year; and that implementation would be subject to the required governance process.</p> <p>The Council then consulted upon a proposal for the future of the Carers' Grant between 12<sup>th</sup> June and 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017. During that time, 226 people gave their views using the BeHeard website and a further 84 citizens were engaged and gave their views at carers' meetings. An overview of the feedback received can be found in Appendix 2.</p>
<b>4. Compliance Issues:</b>
<p>4.1 <u>Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?</u></p> <p>These proposals support the Vision and Forward Plan, as agreed by Cabinet on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2017: Health – A great place to grow old in. Help people become healthier and more independent with measurable improvement in physical activity and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>4.2 <u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>The Council's approved budget proposals included reductions to the Carers' Grant of £222,000 in 17/18 and £444,000 in 18/19. The proposals in this report allow these savings to be made. The budget available from the commencement of any proposed scheme in 2017/18 is £347,783 and in 2018/19+ is £125,783. No grants have been made in this financial year.</p> <p>4.3 <u>Legal Implications</u></p> <p>The relevant legal powers are contained in the Care Act 2014 together with associated legislation and statutory guidance relating to the provision of services for carers.</p> <p>4.4 <u>Public Sector Equality Duty</u></p> <p>An Equality Analysis has been undertaken to support this decision. It identified both adverse and positive impacts upon carers in Birmingham. Although some carers may no longer have the opportunity to access the previous level of funding, due to the more limited nature of their caring responsibilities, this is mitigated by their access to an assessment by the Carers' Hub which could offer them other forms of support in their caring role.</p>

## **5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:**

- 5.1 Since 1999 the Directorate has provided grants to carers who support a person aged 18 years or older. Each grant is worth £250 and is paid directly to the carer to be used towards the cost of a holiday, or something else that will help sustain them in their caring role. Carers have been able to re-apply for a grant every 2 years, with allocation usually on a first come, first served basis.
- 5.2 A review of the scheme was completed in June 2013 and identified that over 12,000 carers had received a single grant, out of an approximate population of 110,000 carers; with over 8,000 carers having received two or more grants. It also identified that the existing scheme did not provide evidence of a grant's impact on a carer's wellbeing.
- 5.3 In 2015, we consulted on a proposal to use an e-marketplace. Although half of the respondents at the time were in favour of the e-marketplace, we received a large number of comments regarding the fact that it did not offer a consistent selection of services across all of Birmingham and the proposal has not yet been taken forward.
- 5.4 In their report "Valuing Carers 2015", Carers UK calculate that the estimated 113,000 informal carers in Birmingham contribute £2.4bn per annum to the care and health economy.
- 5.5 To the question: "Do you think that removing the current scheme and replacing it with one that allocates money following an assessment on activity identified, discussed and agreed with the carer during the assessment process is a good idea?", 46% of respondents to the BeHeard survey thought that it was either a "good" or "very good" idea, while 32% thought that it was a "bad" or "very bad" idea.
- 5.6 In light of the poor value for money achieved by the current Carers' Grant Scheme, it is proposed that the current Carers' Grant Scheme is closed.
- 5.7 It is proposed to introduce new arrangements which link the use of the remaining funds to the assessments carried out by the Carers' Hub, so that specific outcomes for the carer can be identified; as amended in the light of comments received (see Appendix 2). The proposed new arrangements would follow an assessment by the Carers' Hub. It should be recognised that the funding under discussion is not the only resource that will be used in meeting carers' needs (other resources will include information and advice, signposting to support groups, access to training etc.) and if there is a specific need for the carer that remains to be met, access to this funding could be considered in light of the resources available. Following the assessment, carers can be categorised into bands depending upon their caring input: band 1 (£100), for carers caring up to 10 hours per week, band 2 (£150) for carers caring up to 50 hours per week and band 3 (£250) for carers caring over 50 hours per week.
- 5.8 The proposal which focusses on carer assessment is part of a larger piece of work to bolster the City's support for carers. In July, Cabinet considered proposals on the use of the Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF), which included a "policy decision to channel shift all Carers assessments to community based Carers Hub, with associated support embedded within communities," (key decision 003917 refers). It will also feature in a report due to be presented to Cabinet in October 2017, "Birmingham City Council's Vision and Strategy for Adult Social Care services".

5.9 During one of the consultation meetings a citizen observed that:

“Carers do not always want to go through assessments with different organisations, we are having to tell our story all over again...”

It is acknowledged, that there is a need to ensure that the work of the Council, the NHS and the third sector is complementary and does not unnecessarily duplicate the work of another. As part of the ongoing integration activity through the BCF and iBCF, the NHS and the Council will seek to build upon working relationships with partners to try and create an environment in which the resources for carers are deployed effectively and maximises benefits for carers.

## 6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

6.1 The alternative option of discontinuing the Carers’ Grant Scheme in Birmingham if a method of ensuring value for money cannot be agreed upon is not required.

## 7. Reasons for Decision(s):

7.1 The Carer’s Grant was subject to further consultation having been included as part of the Council’s savings proposals for 2017/18+. The consultation sought views on ways in which we can use the Council’s diminishing resources to better target and focus the remaining funds.

### Signatures

### Date

Councillor Paulette Hamilton  
Cabinet Member for  
Health and Social Care

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Graeme Betts  
Interim Corporate Director Adult  
Social Care & Health

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### List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

1. Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) – Provisional Spending Plans For 2017/18 – July 17
2. Carers Grants – Permission to Consult – May 2017
3. Birmingham City Council Vision and Forward Plan – May 2017
4. Birmingham City Council Draft Financial Plan 2017+ - 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017
5. Budget Consultation 2017+ - December 2016
6. Making the Carer’s Small Grant Scheme work better for carers – June 2015
7. “Valuing Carers 2015”, Carers UK

### List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):

1. Equality Assessment
2. Consultation Findings Report

Report Version	V7	Dated	31/08/2017
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